

Committee to receive such evidence and to report on any cases which may be thus brought before it. All persons who are able to send details and information concerning cases of depredation upon our plants, are earnestly requested to communicate with the Chairman of this Committee, Nathaniel T. Kidder, 610 Sears Building, Boston, Mass.

A NEW POPULAR FIELD BOOK.¹—The past summer has given those who wander afield in search of flowers an opportunity to test the helpfulness of a little pocket field-book by Mr. F. Schuyler Mathews. Written from the point of view of a lover of nature, and of an artist who keenly appreciates the beauty and individuality of every plant he treats, it offers itself as a charmingly companionable guide to a first acquaintance with our wild plants. To a first acquaintance, we say, for, although a botanist of experience will find here and there a suggestion that may be new and a lesson or two in the accurate naming of colors, he will be less inclined to use the book himself than to wish it well and to recommend it to friends less well informed. Yet it is perhaps well to remember that thorough botanists are few in comparison with the increasing host of intelligent observers who are looking for accurate information, not too difficult of acquirement, in regard to our wild flowers. To this large class of summer enthusiasts, amateur collectors, and even to the serious student who is beginning to make a herbarium, Mr. Mathews's book will be very welcome.

In size, the book is made to conform to the requirement that it "must fit the narrow limits of our pocket at all hazards." In saying this the author is perhaps forgetting that most of the users of his book may be so unfortunate as not to have a pocket for any book at all. But it will certainly go into a Boston bag or other substitute for the masculine receptacle. The make-up of the book is well suited to the field use for which it is intended. Every right hand page bears a clear-cut drawing in black and white of a species, often of two or three, described in the opposite text. In the margins of the text, the

¹ Field Book of American Wild Flowers — being a Description of their Character and Habits, a Concise Definition of their Colors, and Incidental References to the Insects which Assist in their Fertilization. By F. Schuyler Mathews, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1902.

common names, the colors, and the flowering season, stand out in heavy-faced type, with the Latin names in italics. The descriptions are brief, and, so far as is consistent with accuracy, are freed from technicalities. With the descriptions are incorporated a variety of notes, among which those on the relations of the plants to insects present a novel and suggestive feature. This matter is emphasized in the introduction, and by two introductory plates that show the commoner butterflies, bees, and flies concerned in the cross-pollination of flowers. A commonly neglected line of observation is thus constantly kept before the student.

The illustrations of species are the most striking and useful feature of the book. Of these there are over four hundred—a few being colored. The pen and ink studies, as the author calls them, show a charming grace and facility of drawing; but more than this they most happily present the characteristic look of the living plant. The very droop of the leaves, the turn of the stem, the familiar pose of the plant, are admirably caught and preserved. After studying them one can only regret that every plant mentioned in the text can not have had the same accurate, sympathetic interpretation. But in a field book, or pocket manual, space is limited. We find, therefore, that many plants are omitted altogether. The common, the conspicuous species, that may be met from Maine to Virginia are there—that is to say, the common flowers. Trees, shrubs, except a few, and also grasses and sedges are missing—and obviously there is no room for them. By its title, the book excludes them.

A captious reviewer, with dogmatic convictions on matters of botanical controversy, or a stickler for scientific form and precision might be inclined to be severe with certain things about this book—for it is a popular book. For such a critic, however, the book is not intended. Others will find in it the help they seek, and something more.

A NEW LOCAL FLORA.—Messrs. Charles Humphrey Bissell and Luman Andrews have just issued a Flora of the Town of Southington, Connecticut and its Vicinity.¹ The work, which is an excellently printed octavo pamphlet of more than a hundred pages, is

¹ Connecticut School Document No. 15, published by the State Board of Education, 1902.